DC #35

DIRECT CURRENTS

BOOKS SHIPPING IN DECEMBER

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THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD
hardcover featuring The Fastest Man Alive . . .

BATMAN: BRIDE OF THE DEMON
hardcover delivers more Dark Knight adventure . . .

PLUS . . .

an interview with former FLASH artist CARMINE INFANTINO

Cover of the Month
JUSTICE LEAGUE EUROPE #22

THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD HARDCOVER EDITION

For fifty years he's been known as The Fastest Man Alive and now, to commemorate his fiftieth anniversary year, DC Comics presents **THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD Hardcover Edition**, a celebration of a great hero who has spanned six generations and three incarnations.

THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD gives the greatest representative sampling ever of the Scarlet Speedster, going back to the very first Jay Garrick Flash story in 1940, through the character's "rebirth" as Barry Allen in 1956 and proceeding through to today's third Flash, Wally West, with stories and art by some of the Golden, Silver, and Modern Ages of Comics' best talents.

Included in THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD are:

- "The Fastest Man Alive," from FLASH #1 (January, 1940) by Gardner Fox and Harry Lampert, the first-ever appearance of Jay Garrick, The Flash;
- "The Flash and the Black Widow," from FLASH #66 (August, 1945) by Robert Bloch and E.E. Hibbard;
- "The Mystery of the Human Thunderbolt," from SHOWCASE #4 (September, 1956), the Silver Age re-introduction of The Flash, by Robert Kanigher, Carmine Infantino, and Joe Kubert;
- "Vengeance of the Immortal Villain," from FLASH #137 (June, 1963) by Fox, Infantino, and Joe Giella, co-starring the Justice Society of America;
- "Trail of the False Green Lanterns," from FLASH #143 (March, 1964) by John Broome, Infantino, and Giella;
- "How to Prevent the Flash," from FIVE-STAR SUPER-HERO SPECTACULAR (1977) by Cary Bates, Irv Novick, and Frank McLaughlin;
- "Heart of Stone," from the new FLASH series #2 (July, 1987) by Mike Baron, Jackson Guice, and Larry Mahlstedt.

In all, the 288-page THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD Hardcover Edition features 17 classic tales of The Flash, plus a foreword by longtime Flash artist Carmine Infantino and an introduction by Mike Gold. The cover is by Infantino and John Nyberg.

THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD . . . don't let this one pass you by.

FROM • THE EDITOR

Letters. Boy, do I get letters! It's good to know DC has such attentive readers who let nothing slip by them—and who are not afraid to share their opinions. Read on:

Dear Ms. Brown:

Your DIRECT CURRENTS is a nice-looking (magazine? flier? Well, whatever it is).

What I don't get is why on your "Collector's Pages" the covers are always badly cropped and almost always curl off on the left side. I don't understand why you would do this. Why do you do this? Why do you do this?? How hard would it be to lay the cover down on a flat surface when you photograph it? Why would you (for 30 issues) retardedly reproduce classic covers in such a stupid way? (Occasionally they've been done correctly—#25, for instance.) Why would you do this??

Tammy, tell me true.

Richard Feinberg
288 Chestnut Avenue #3
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Richard:

Your fervent question is heard loud and clear, and there is a reasonable explanation for the curling of the "Collector's Page" covers. All of the DC books of the past are bound into big volumes so they can be used by the staff only for research purposes. The covers that I choose for DIRECT CURRENTS are sometimes bound close to the edge of the cover, thereby producing the unfortunate curling that you sometimes see. It's not by design, but more because that's hows it is that the covers come out that way.

I hope that you get some enjoyment out of seeing pieces of DC's history reproduced anyway.

Here's another popular request:

Dear Tammy,

I am a longstanding comics fan, with a slight problem you may be able to help with. I have every issue of DIRECT CURRENTS except #25 and #31. I understand you are probably flooded with letters like mine, so if it is not possible to get copies of these, I would be happy with photocopies.

Thanking you in advance for whatever you are able to do to assist me in my quest,

Paul Belliveau
1444 Champlain Street
Dieppe, N.B., E1A 1R4, CANADA

Paul:

Yours is a very frequent request that, unfortunately, I will not be able to fulfill. DIRECT CURRENTS is not a backlist publication, or one that is available like back issues of old comics. I don't keep a large amount of back issues on hand—only a couple for my files.

Many readers write in asking the same questions, and I give them the same answer. Sorry!

And, it's good to know somebody's reading my humble editorial column!

Dear Ms. Brown,

In your column in DIRECT CURRENTS #32 you asked for comments regarding front page articles. While I can certainly understand the need for publicity for new publications, whether they be continuing or limited series, graphic albums, compilations or special projects, ongoing series deserve attention and publicity as well. The recent DOOM PATROL lead article in DIRECT CURRENTS #31 was a good example of highlighting one of DC's better books, which has been critically praised but not as well read as one would think. There are other books like DOOM PATROL which could use a similar "shot in the arm": SANDMAN, HELLBLAZER, STARMAN, and SUICIDE SQUAD. In my opinion, any of these could benefit greatly from a feature article in DIRECT CURRENTS.

In addition, articles on books currently undergoing changes would be interesting to read in DIRECT CURRENTS. The current shake-up in SUICIDE SQUAD has me curious as to why the changes were made in the first place, and THE NEW TITANS is scheduled for cast changes as well. I think readers would like to read the inside "scoops" as to what these changes entail and why they are being made. Also, professional changes are newsworthy as well. For instance, the writers and artists of BATMAN and DETECTIVE recently "flip-flopped" on their assignments: why these changes were made is another item worthy of inclusion in DIRECT CURRENTS.

Thank you for the opportunity for us readers to voice our opinions regarding DC's newsletter.

Jim Kelly
29 West Melrose Street
Valley Stream, NY 11580

Jim:

Thanks for an insightful letter that offers some good suggestions on how to improve DIRECT CURRENTS. I'm always looking for reader input into what you all want to see covered. Things happen so you never know when a suggestion may prompt a change for the better. Keep writing!

If any of you out there have any questions or comments about DC or DIRECT CURRENTS, please write in and exercise your right to speak out.

Until next month,

Tammy

Paul Kupperberg, Writer
Tammy Brown, Editor

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Printed in Canada

BATMAN: BRIDE OF THE DEMON HARDCOVER GRAPHIC NOVEL

Each time THE BATMAN and Rā's al Ghūl have met in combat, it's been even odds who would emerge the victor . . . or whether either or both would come out of it alive.

Now they meet again in the hardcover graphic novel **BATMAN: BRIDE OF THE DEMON** . . . and once again, the outcome —and the survival of both—is in question.

Rā's al Ghūl has devised a plan to save humanity from itself and reclaim the Earth from the path of ecological disaster. While his goals may be noble, his methods are not: for his plan to work, Rā's al Ghūl must kill most of the planet's population.

When THE BATMAN learns of the master criminal's plan, he is forced into battle with Talia, Rā's's daughter and the one woman Batman loves—and with Rā's himself.

BATMAN: BRIDE OF THE DEMON is the 96-page sequel to the 1987 BATMAN: SON OF THE DEMON graphic novel; written by Mike W. Barr, it features art and a painted cover by Tom Grindberg.

BATMAN: BRIDE OF THE DEMON . . . where the fate of mankind will be decided.

BOOKS SHIPPING IN DECEMBER

☐ **ACTION COMICS #661**
Jimmy Olsen, the one-time Elastic Lad, stretches his luck when he tries to get an interview with Plastic Man and photos of him in action. Also, Bibbo finds a winning lottery ticket. Written by Roger Stern, with art by Bob McLeod and Brett Breeding. Cover by Kerry Gammill and Breeding. $1.00

☐ **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Comics #25**
Part 2 of the 3-part "Scavengers": Vajra may have saved the life of her friend Timoth the Centaur, but that doesn't make her any more welcome in a centaur village under siege by dragons. Written by Dan Mishkin, with art by Jan Duursema and Rick Magyar. Cover by Duursema. *(New Format)* $1.75

☐ **AVATAR™ Comics #1**
(of a 3-issue miniseries)
Elminster the Sage is lost in the labyrinthine folds of magical chaos as the Realms quake in crisis . . . and Midnight, Adon and company stand trial for Elminster's murder. Written by Barbara Kesel, with art by Dameon Willich and John Nyberg. Painted cover by Willich. (*New Format*. 96 Pages.) $5.95

☐ **BATMAN #459**
A vicious killer and The Batman meet on the very spot where Thomas and Martha Wayne were murdered. And Commissioner Gordon thinks he's found a new lease on life in the form of Sarah Essen . . . but things may not be as rosy as Gordon believes. Written by Alan Grant, with art by Norm Breyfogle and Steve Mitchell. Cover by Breyfogle. $1.00

☐ **BATMAN: BRIDE OF THE DEMON Hardcover Graphic Novel**
Rā's al Ghūl has devised a plan to save Earth from ecological disaster . . . but in order to implement it, he must kill most of the planet's population. The Batman must battle overwhelming odds and Talia, the woman he loves, to save humanity. Written by Mike W. Barr, with art and painted cover by Tom Grindberg. $19.95

☐ **BATMAN: THE DAILIES Trade Paperback, Vol. 2**
(of a 3-book series)
The second volume of the classic 1940s Batman syndicated newspaper strip reprints the dailies from October 30, 1944 through November 24, 1945, featuring work by Bob Kane, Bill Finger, Dick Sprang, and Jack Burnley. This 11" × 8½", 184-page trade paperback edition (co-published with Kitchen Sink Press) also features new editorial material based on interviews with the strip's creators. $12.95

☐ **BATMAN: LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT #15**
Part 5 of the 5-part "Prey": The Batman has faced the nightmares forced upon him by Hugo Strange . . . and the nightmares have won. Now, with only the bats to remind him of a promise, a hope and a dream, he must battle his way back to sanity or see Strange destroy everything he's built in Gotham City. Written by Doug Moench, with art and cover by Paul Gulacy and Terry Austin. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.50

☐ **BOOKS OF MAGIC #2**
(of a 4-book miniseries)
Tim Hunter's journey through the magical realm of the DC Universe continues as the boy destined to become the next great sorcerer joins HELLBLAZER'S John Constantine on a tour of the present where they will encounter The Spectre, Doctor Fate, Deadman, Zatanna and others. Written by Neil Gaiman, with fully painted artwork and painted cover by Scott Hampton. *(Prestige Format)* $3.95

☐ **CAPTAIN ATOM #49**
Plastique is on trial for her life . . . and though he loves her, Captain Atom must testify against her. Written by Greg Weisman, with art by Michael Adams. Cover by Adams and Bob Smith. $1.00

☐ **THE DEMON #8**
Jason Blood is back on Earth from Hell . . . only to find his best friends on trial for his murder. But with Klarion, the Witch-Boy masquerading as the Gotham City district attorney, it's clear that only The Batman stands a chance of setting this situation right. Written by Alan Grant, with art and cover by Val Semeiks and Denis Rodier. *(New Format)* $1.50

THE DEMON #8

☐ **DETECTIVE COMICS #625**
A murderous fiend has escaped from Arkham Asylum and is stalking Gotham's political and social elite. When Vicki Vale gets a clue as to why he's on his murderous rampage, the killer called Abattoir marks her as his next victim . . . and The Batman has to save her before it's too late. Written by Marv Wolfman, with art by Jim Aparo and Mike DeCarlo. Cover by Michael Golden. $1.00

☐ **DR. FATE #24**
Kent and Inza Nelson are back . . . and farewells are made to some other cast members as the one true Dr. Fate emerges and everyone comes to terms with their special destinies. Written by J.M. DeMatteis, with art and cover by Shawn McManus. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **DRAGONLANCE™ Comics #27**
Riva's dragonmount is found at a secret nursery for silver dragons . . . and though the dragons of Taladas are determined to disperse the dragon eggs to prevent their corruption by evil forces, Eron the Keeper is equally determined to keep his nursery intact. Written by Charles Moore and Lisa Moore, with art by Ron Randall and Randy Elliott. Cover by Randall. *(New Format)* $1.75

☐ **ENEMY ACE: WAR IDYLL Hardcover Graphic Novel**
War is hell, but it never seemed to bother Hans von Hammer, the German World War I ace. But now, years later, a Vietnam era veteran sits at the bedside of the Enemy Ace as both men deal with their pasts. This 128-page hardcover, comic book-sized graphic novel is written and painted by George Pratt. $24.95

☐ **FLASH #47**
Part 3 of 3: Flash wants to make fast work of Gorilla Grodd and his animal legions and to do so, he enlists the aid of Vixen and Rex the Wonder Dog. Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art and cover by Greg LaRocque and José Marzan, Jr. $1.00

☐ **FLASH CLOISSONÉ PIN**
Flash is celebrating his 50th Anniversary and to commemorate the occasion (as well as the new CBS-TV FLASH television series), DC presents the new FLASH Cloissoné Pin. The pin is 1⅛" in diameter and is three colors with goldtone, and features the Flash logo with a lightning bolt. Don't miss it as they're sure to sell . . . fast. $5.95

☐ **FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Comics #18**
While Minder is on the verge of collapse as the gods walk the earth, Vartan is possessed by his deity, who is determined to destroy Helm, the guardian of the Outer Planes . . . a move that would result in the destruction of the Realms Master. Written

BOOKS SHIPPING IN DECEMBER

by Jeff Grubb, with art by Dave Simons. Cover by R.A. Morales. *(New Format)* $1.75

☐ **FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Comics Annual #1**
The Realms Master drops anchor in Waterdeep, where Agrivar has a reunion with his sister, and the Forgotten Realms crew clashes with the members of the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS crew. Written by Jeff Grubb, with art by Tom Raney, Dan Reed, Eric Kachelhofer, and Jim Fern. Painted cover by Gil Kane. *(New Format)* $2.95

☐ **THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD Hardcover Edition**
The Flash is 50 and to celebrate his anniversary year, DC presents the sixth in our series of Greatest Stories hardcover collections starring the Fastest Man Alive. This 288-page collection features seventeen classic Flash tales spanning his fifty years and three incarnations, including the very first Flash story from 1940, the origin of the Silver Age Flash from 1956, as well as a representational slice of the third Flash. Stories and art are by Gardner Fox, Harry Lampert, Carmine Infantino, Joe Kubert, Robert Kanigher, John Broome, Cary Bates, Ross Andru, Mike Baron, Jackson Guice and others. The foreword is by Infantino, with an introduction by Mike Gold. The full-color wraparound cover is by Infantino and John Nyberg. $29.95

☐ **GREEN ARROW #42**
Oliver Queen once again finds himself involved in acts of terrorism as he becomes entangled in a web of deceit designed by the IRA. Written by Mike Grell, with art and cover by Denys Cowan. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.25

☐ **GREEN LANTERN #9**
Part 1 of the 4-part "G'nortin', Honey": The three Green Lanterns receive their surprise assignments from the Guardians of the Universe . . . and Guy Gardner is pretty darned full of himself as he is chosen to be Earth's Green Lantern . . . until he's reminded of G'nort. Is Earth big enough for two Green Lanterns? Do you really have to ask? Written by Gerard Jones, with art and cover by Joe Staton and Bruce Patterson. $1.00

☐ **HAWK & DOVE #21**
When Four Female Furies from Apokolips invade the nation's capital for a little "girls' night out," Hawk & Dove charge into battle . . . a fight that leads to a shocking conclusion where an old friend falls. Written by Barbara and Karl Kesel, with art by Steve Erwin and Scott Hanna. Cover by Erwin and Karl Kesel. $1.00

☐ **HAWKWORLD #9**
Is Byth dead or alive? Katar has to prove he's the latter before he returns to Thanagar . . . leaving Hawkwoman behind on Earth in prison for Byth's murder. Written by Tim Truman and John Ostrander, with art and cover by Graham Nolan and Gary Kwapisz. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **HELLBLAZER #38**
Constantine faces a crazed hog butcher who can't distinguish between his grisly work and his hostile feelings toward humanity. Written by Jamie Delano, with art by Steve Pugh. Painted cover by Kent Williams. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE AMERICA #46**
Remember the heroic General Glory? No? Well, Guy Gardner is his numero uno fan. He even has all his comic books . . . except for #1, which he's trying to buy at auction. But a mysterious old man is bidding against him . . . and an old man with a bazooka seems to want to kill him. Written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Linda Medley and John Beatty. Cover by Adam Hughes. $1.00

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE AMERICA #47**
Part 2 of 5: General Glory convinces the JLA that they should go on a mission with him to stop a supposed Nazi resurgence. On the way, they pick up Mister Miracle—the wrong one!—and he doesn't react well to being thrust into battle. Written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Linda Medley and John Beatty. Cover by Adam Hughes. $1.00

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE EUROPE #22**
Part 3 of 3: Who's kidnapped the JLE's cat? Why would anyone want that mangy beast? These and other questions are asked and answered as Power Girl searches for the cat and its abductors in London, the site of the JLE's new embassy. Written by Keith Giffen and Gerard Jones, with art by Marshall Rogers and Jose Marzan Jr. Cover by Bart Sears $1.00

☐ **THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #16**
The Khunds are on the march and their mysterious new weapon, the Red Terror, is destroying worlds as fast as they can use it. Laurel Gand is sent undercover to discover the source of the Khunds' religious fervor . . . while the rest of the Legion is divided among two targeted planets in a desperate attempt to thwart the enemy blitzkrieg. Written by Keith Giffen and Tom and Mary Bierbaum, with art by Giffen, Brandon Peterson, Al Gordon, and Carlos Garzon. Cover by Giffen and Gordon. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.75

☐ **LOBO #4**
(of a 4-issue miniseries)
Lobo takes a break from his labors on a paradise planet, but when his antagonists arrive, will there be anything left of it? Plus, Lobo finally delivers his prisoner, but with a twist. Written by Keith Giffen and Alan Grant, with art and painted cover by Simon Bisley. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **MISTER MIRACLE #24**
The Lump is back to wage battle in the realm of the unconscious. He is a creature who can change your worst nightmares . . . and Shilo Norman fights for his life . . . in his sleep. Written by Doug Moench, with art by Ken Hooper and Bob Dvorak. Cover by Joe Phillips and Dvorak. $1.00

☐ **THE NAZZ #2**
(of a 4-book miniseries)
The Nazz learns the secrets behind the government-backed heroes, the Retaliators, and imbues his followers with superpowers, as his best friend Johnny chronicles the Nazz's exploits in a comic book. Written by Tom Veitch, with art and cover by Bryan Talbot. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Prestige Format.)* $4.95

☐ **NEW GODS #23**
The Forever People take the spotlight as they must decide if they should remain on Earth and fight for its environment, or return to Supertown. Written by Mark Evanier, with art and cover by Steve Erwin and Will Blyberg. *(New Format)* $1.50

NEW GODS #23

☐ **THE NEW TITANS #73**
The Terminator's hunt for the missing Titans continues as he comes under attack by not one but two Wildebeests. Plus: the shocking revelations of the fate of Arella and Danny Chase. And who is the mysterious stranger called Phantasm? Written by Marv Wolfman, with art and cover by Tom Grummett and Al Vey. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.75

BOOKS SHIPPING IN DECEMBER

☐ **THE PRIVATE FILES OF THE SHADOW Hardcover Edition**
Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows and now you can be let in on the secret as DC re-presents five classic Shadow tales by Dennis O'Neil and Mike Kaluta, reprinted from issues #1–4 and #6 of DC's 1970s series starring The Shadow. Also included in this 128-page volume is an all-new Shadow story written and drawn by Kaluta, as well as an essay on The Shadow and his crew by O'Neil. The cover is by Kaluta. This is a relisting of the hardcover published in 1989. $19.95

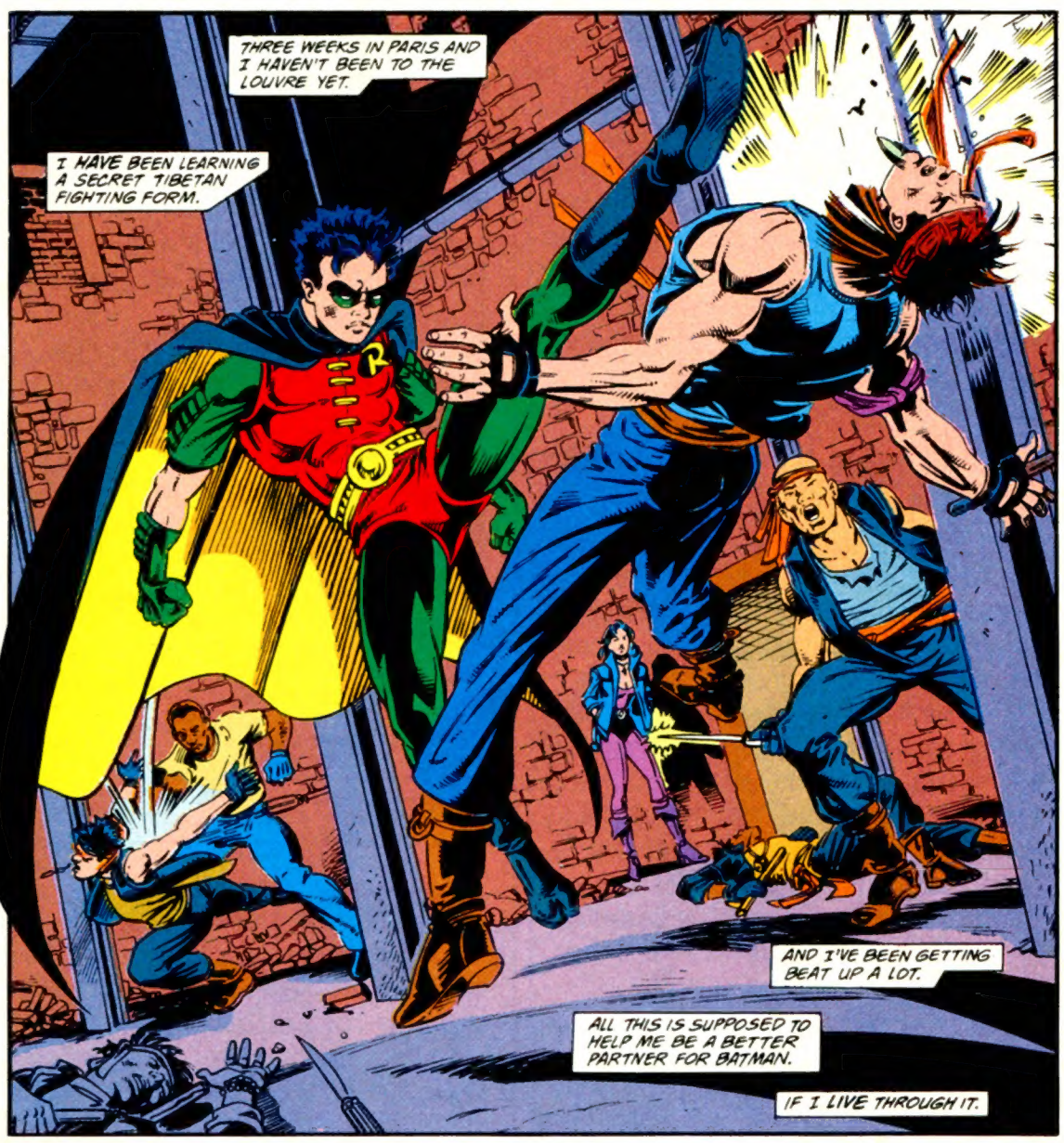
☐ **THE QUESTION QUARTERLY #2**
Vic Sage returns to Hub City to reunite Myra with her dying daughter . . . only to find the city in a state of deterioration worse than when he left and a benefactor who may want to kill him. Written by Dennis O'Neil, with art by Denys Cowan. Painted cover by Cowan. *(New Format)* $2.50

☐ **ROBIN #2**
(of a 5-issue miniseries)
In Paris, Robin rescues a renegade Drug Enforcement Agency operative from Europe's most feared crimelord, the mysterious King Snake . . . and he's only just beginning to learn how Henri Ducard and Lady Shiva fit into the scheme of things. Written by Chuck Dixon, with art by Tom Lyle and Bob Smith. Cover by Brian Bolland. $1.00

☐ **THE SHADOW STRIKES! #16**
When prominent New Yorkers are targeted for death by a gang of beautiful women assassins and their mysterious skull-faced mastermind, The Shadow steps in . . . until Lamont Cranston becomes the next target. Written by Gerard Jones, with art by Rod Whigham and Gerry Fernandez. Cover by Eduardo Barreto. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.75

☐ **STAR TREK® #17**
Part 1 of 2: The Federation must combine forces with the Klingon Empire to stop a menacing race from ravaging a world that has a critical element both governments desperately need. The problem is that this race seems to have far superior firepower and the endangered world has a traitor in their midst. Written by Howard Weinstein, with art by Ken Hooper and Bob Dvorak. Cover by Jerome Moore. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **SUICIDE SQUAD #49**
The New Thinker has discovered the secret identity of Oracle: Barbara Gordon. Can the now crippled Batgirl save herself without resorting to murder? Only Amanda Waller knows for sure. Written by John Ostrander and Kim Yale, with art by Luke McDonnell and Geof Isherwood. Cover by Norm Breyfogle. $1.00

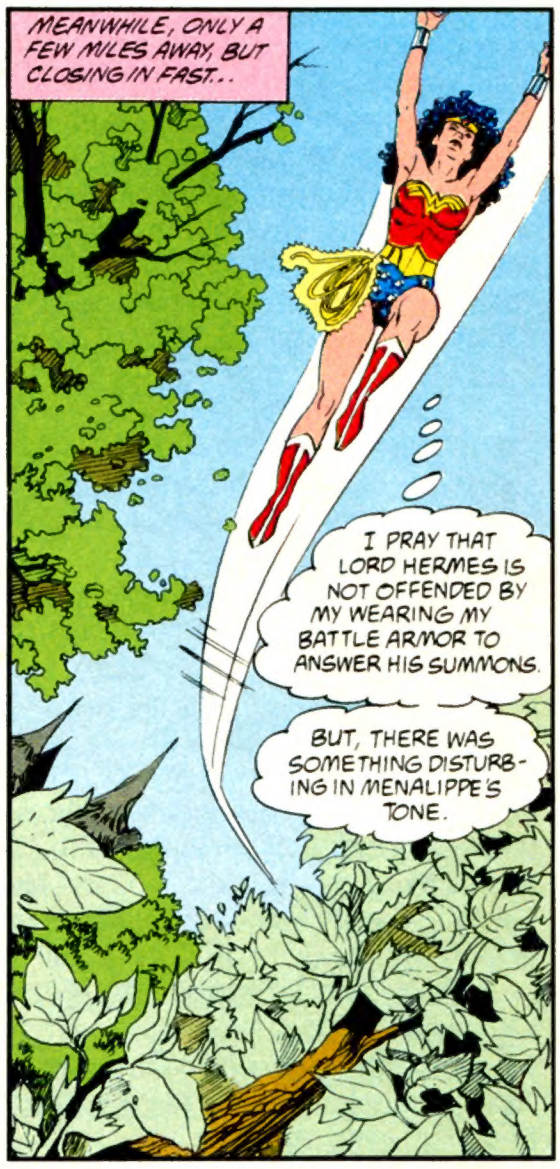

THREE WEEKS IN PARIS AND I HAVEN'T BEEN TO THE LOUVRE YET.
I HAVE BEEN LEARNING A SECRET TIBETAN FIGHTING FORM.
AND I'VE BEEN GETTING BEAT UP A LOT.
ALL THIS IS SUPPOSED TO HELP ME BE A BETTER PARTNER FOR BATMAN.
IF I LIVE THROUGH IT.

ROBIN #2

☐ **ADVENTURES OF SUPERBOY #13**
You can't believe anything you read in the tabloids, right? Unless, of course, they happen to employ a psychic who's able to contact a being from another dimension named Mr. Mxyzptlk. Written by Tom Peyer, with art and cover by Paris Cullins and Ty Templeton. $1.00

☐ **SUPERMAN #52**
Terra-Man rides into Metropolis to clean up leaking toxic waste dumps on the outskirts of town in any way necessary, forcing the Man of Steel to confront the burning question of who are the real villains in Metropolis. Written by Jerry Ordway, pencilled by Kerry Gammill, and inked by Dennis Janke. Cover by Ordway. $1.00

☐ **WONDER WOMAN #51**
Wonder Woman must find Hermes before a mysterious killer does. And who is behind the savage attacks at Arkham Asylum? Written by George Pérez, with art by Jill Thompson and Romeo Tanghal. Cover by Pérez. $1.50


MEANWHILE, ONLY A FEW MILES AWAY, BUT CLOSING IN FAST...
I PRAY THAT LORD HERMES IS NOT OFFENDED BY MY WEARING MY BATTLE ARMOR TO ANSWER HIS SUMMONS.
BUT, THERE WAS SOMETHING DISTURBING IN MENALIPPE'S TONE.

WONDER WOMAN #51

☐ **WORLD WITHOUT END #2**
(of a 6-book miniseries)
Brother Bones is dramatically born and embarks on his mission . . . to expunge all traces of womankind from the face of the Earth. Written by Jamie Delano, with fully painted art and painted cover by John Higgins. *(Suggested for Mature Readers.)* $2.50

people at WORK

CARMINE INFANTINO

The Flash has been going strong for fifty years with only a few, brief interruptions, and, in spite of the literally dozens of artists who have set pen and brush to paper to illustrate his adventures, no one name is more closely associated with the tales of the Scarlet Speedster than that of Carmine Infantino. Not only has Carmine's work on the characters spanned six decades and two incarnations of the Fastest Man Alive, but he's also one of the men responsible for the revitalization of The Flash that ushered in the famed Silver Age of Comics.

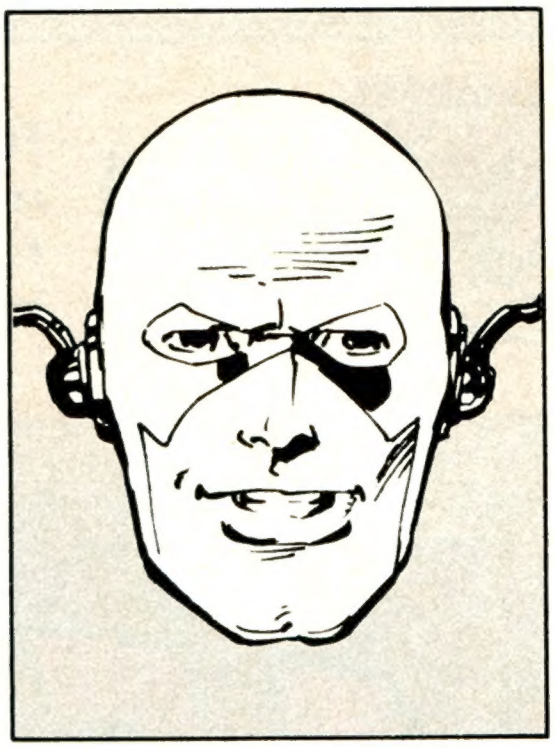
"I was born May 24, 1925 in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn, New York," Carmine told us. "I went to school and studied art at the School of Industrial Arts, Queens College, the Brooklyn Museum of Art and at the Art Students League. I was in school when I started to pick up on the newspaper comic strips . . . it was a lot more interesting to me than advertising art, which I didn't like very much. It bored the hell out of me. But I started looking at the strips running in newspapers like *The New York Daily Mirror*, which ran Hal Foster's *"Tarzan,"* Milton Caniff's *"Terry and the Pirates,"* and *"Flash Gordon"* by Alex Raymond. All those people. I guess more than anything else, they're what got me interested in the comics. That and the movie serials that used to be shown every week in the theaters. It all worked together to point me towards comics."

Carmine entered the comic book field with work for some of the smaller companies that flourished, if only briefly, during the early years of the comic book industry. "I can't even remember the names of those companies anymore," Carmine said with a laugh.

"My first real sale was a strip called *"Jack Frost"* that Frank Giacoia and I did for Timely Comics, which was the name Marvel Comics went by in those days. Strangely enough, I was the inker on that and Frank was the penciller, which was a complete reversal of the roles we wound up in in later years. Not that I went into comics to be an inker, but you took whatever you could get in those days. We really didn't care that much, just as long as we were working. And Frank was very good, very good as a penciller, even though he made his mark over the years as an inker. I don't know how good an inker *I* was. I can't remember back that far.

"From there I did some work for Quality Comics, following Nick Viscardi on *"Lady Luck."* You probably know Nick Viscardi better as Nick Cardy. Anyway, after Quality I went over to Hillman Comics where I wrote and drew *"Airboy"* and *"The Heap"* and from there I slowly worked my way over to DC Comics.

"DC was actually two separate companies in those days, one called All American Comics and the other National Comics, and they were right down the hall from one another. Frank Giacoia and I went together to see Ed Eisenberg at National. He took a look at our work and said that he didn't need anybody for the Superman or Batman titles, which National published, but he thought that maybe Sheldon Mayer, an editor at All American, might be able to use us. We went in and saw Shelly and he hired us right then and there, beginning us on JOHNNY THUNDER. Then I worked on THE GHOST PATROL, the original FLASH and, from there, we did a myriad of characters, including being part of the team of artists who worked on these trilogies for the *"Justice Society of America"* in ALL-STAR COMICS. I'd do my chapter, Joe Kubert would do his, Alex Toth would do another and while we each didn't know what the others were doing in their chapters, it all seemed to tie together somehow. I think it was Gardner Fox who wrote those stories and his scripts made it all work. They were excellent scripts. Marvelous."



No, this isn't Carmine, but The Fastest Man Alive—The Flash!

Though the age of super-hero comics was nearing its end, Carmine managed to keep busy in comics. "I did romance, westerns, science fiction . . . anything. You name it, we just kept on working until the super-hero became popular again.

"That happened, of course, when the Flash was revitalized in SHOWCASE in 1956. I went up to the office one day and Julie Schwartz said to me, 'We want to try super-heroes again.' I said, 'Oh, lord, not those again.' I thought they were dead and gone after they had fallen out of favor a few years earlier, but DC wanted to give them another shot, starting with a revamping of the Flash. Well, work was scarce in those days, so I said okay. Why not?

"I can't honestly tell you I thought it was going to be as big a hit as it turned out to be because I suspect I didn't think anything of the sort at the time. I just went home and did the job from Bob Kanigher's script, and that was it. We did that first story in SHOWCASE #4 and then there were, I think, three more issues after that. But again, nobody really expected anything from it. We were just bashing it out, filling time and space. Me, Julie, none of us thought we were presiding over the rebirth of the super-hero comics, but then, all of a sudden, it exploded. When the sales started coming in, it broke loose like a bonfire and that in turn resurrected the rest of the super-heroes, like Green Lantern, Atom, Hawkman and all the rest.

"I stayed on Flash until the late 1960s, I think. Well, I was on the strip on and off for twenty years, but I also did a lot of other characters during that time including Adam Strange, Batman, Elongated Man, a lot of science-fiction stories in STRANGE ADVENTURES and MYSTERY IN SPACE, DETECTIVE CHIMP . . . . DETECTIVE CHIMP was always a favorite of mine, by the way. I loved the humor in it. I really got a kick out of doing it."

Carmine's work in the comics industry hasn't been restricted to drawing. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, he served first as DC's art director and then the company's publisher before he returned to his drawing board for both DC and Marvel Comics . . . including coming back to the pages of THE FLASH.

Reflecting on his long association with the Scarlet Speedster, Carmine admits, "I liked the old Flash, the Jay Garrick character, better. Not that I didn't like the Barry Allen character . . . it was more of a challenge to draw because Bob Kanigher had a way of giving you a script that really taxed your artistic ability and made you stretch. So the second Flash made me stretch and for that I was grateful.

"On top of that, you had to work hard if you were working for Julie Schwartz. You'd ask Julie, 'How did you like the job?' and he'd answer, 'I paid you for it, didn't I?' and that was the end of that. He didn't believe in compliments. If you're a professional, you didn't have to ask. I don't agree with that theory, but it worked. He got good work out of good people for a long time with that approach. He's a talented man.

"Bob Kanigher was, too. Bob did some marvelous scripts. If you look at some of his scripts on the Golden Age Flash stories you'll see just how inventive they were. Which isn't to slight writers like Gardner Fox and John Broome. They were all great to work with."

For those of you not familiar with Carmine's tenure on Flash, his work on both the first and second Flash is well represented in this month's THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD hardcover edition. If you're eager to see what he's doing these days, you'll have to consult your daily newspaper, provided you're lucky enough to have one that carries the new syndicated *"Batman"* strip which Carmine helps to produce along with writer William Messner-Loebs and inker John Nyberg. "It's a little strange to be back doing Batman after all these years," Carmine says, "but I managed to fall right back into it in no time at all."

Now in his fourth decade of producing memorable comics, we would expect no less than that from a talent like Carmine Infantino.

THE FASTEST MAN ALIVE!
FLASH

From the DC Archives comes the cover of FLASH #137 of 1963 by Carmine Infantino.